

# interim

Volume 37, Issue 9

September 2019

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

## SSJ Community Days

**Saturday & Sunday  
September 28 & 29**

Bethany Jaeger from KEB will be sharing information with the sisters from a recent study that was done. An information session will be held in October for agregees and associates.

We would ask agrégées and associates to please keep the community in your prayers.



See page 5 for information.



## 17th annual circle of friends a celebration of one hope, one people, one love

4 pm saturday, september 14  
sisters of st. joseph of northwestern pennsylvania

See page 3 for more details

## Inspired by the LCWR Assembly

### *Message from leadership*

*Sisters Phyllis McCracken and Carol Morehouse attended the Leadership Conference of Women Religious annual assembly in Scottsdale, AZ in August. Inspired by the presentations, they share some thoughts.*

The LCWR annual meeting centered on the theme: Imagining Leadership in a Global Community. The keynote address, given

by Sister Pat Murray, IBVM, Director of UISG (union International of Superiors general), called us to recognize the life cycle of religious life: "We are living the cycle of passion, death, and resurrection at personal and organizational levels." She also reflected on the impact of that reality for global religious congregations. Congregations in the



southern hemisphere must work hard to sustain their members and support their ministries. In the northern hemisphere, congregations are relinquishing ministries

(Continued on page 2)

## mission possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

# MISSION: POSSIBLE!

Do you ever question whether you are doing enough for others, or feeling as if you are not doing as much as others might be doing? Do you compare your actions or good works with those of others? Does it sometimes seem that you fill your calendar with "good works" and then go through the motions wishing you were doing something else?

As sisters, associates, and

agrégées, we are called to more than just *doing*. We are called to reach out to our dear neighbor without distinction and to be present. This reminds me of words from a song by Jan Novotka, *The Presence You Are*: "It's not what you do but how you do it; it's not what you see but how you see it; it's not what you say, what you know or achieve, but it's the presence, the presence, you are."

Our presence can make a difference in many ways. Whether it is calling or visiting someone who is homebound, holding the door for someone, smiling at a stranger as you pass on the street, spending a few minutes on the phone with

someone who is lonely, having a cup of coffee with a friend, or perhaps giving grocery gift cards to a homeless person. It's all these things and more, sometimes less, but it's what's in our heart at the time that allows us to be present. It's the difference between helping someone and wishing you were somewhere else, or helping someone with love in your heart and being attentive in the moment.

Whether we are called to do big things in our lifetime or not, we are all called to be present to our neighbor in any way we can - this is what makes the **SSJ Mission Possible**.

### LCWR

(Continued from page 1)

to lay control in the form of foundations, trusts, and other structures. In her words, "It is as if we are all arriving together in the same sacred space, where we are experiencing a greater fragility and vulnerability. In a profound way, this makes us more relevant than ever; it places us in communion with the people of our time and place, especially those at the peripheries." She encouraged us to "widen the tent of our hearts."

In her presidential address, Sharlet Wagner, a fan of roller coasters, spoke of "wild rides" and reaching across borders to strengthen our bonds with sisters around the world, and to witness to hope. In her words, "I do not pretend to understand all that is occurring with and

within religious life today, but I know that God is good and I know that God's goodness continues to pour forth within and through our sisters and our congregations. We are called to walk this path in the most authentic, faith-filled, and passionate ways that we can, and to enter into the utter madness and mystery of it all."

Both of these reflections and the processing at our tables led us to examine what it might really mean to reach across boundaries. Not just cultural and geographic boundaries, but across charisms; to look at charism not only for our community but for the whole of religious life.

The LCWR addresses echoed Pope Francis' assertion

that we are not just living in an era of change but rather, in a change of eras.



*S. Pappas*

*Sister Carol*

# development

## Circle of Friends

### one hope, one people, one love

Join us for outdoor Mass, hot dogs on the grill, games for the kids and an arts and crafts tent.

**saturday, september 14, 2019**

4 p.m. liturgy  
 5 p.m. picnic and games  
 6 p.m. raffle  
 rsvp by sept. 10 at  
[www.ssjerie.org](http://www.ssjerie.org)  
 or 814-836-4198

#### Special request:

Please consider bringing a donation of new shoe laces (any size) or new hair ties for a special collection. These gifts will be blessed and then sent to Annunciation House in El Paso, TX for distribution to immigrants at the border.



For more information or to volunteer, please contact Carol Hermann at 814-836-4198 or [carol.hermann@ssjerie.org](mailto:carol.hermann@ssjerie.org).

## Erie Gives . . . by the numbers



Collectively, a total of **\$113,814** was donated to the Sisters of St. Joseph and our ministries:

Sisters of St. Joseph  
**\$12,896.54**

SSJ Neighborhood Network  
**\$51,489.20**

Saint Mary's Home of Erie  
**\$19,639.14**

St. Patrick's Haven  
**\$17,053.86**

and Erie DAWN  
**\$12,736.06**

Heartfelt thanks to the many donors who supported the Sisters of St. Joseph and our sponsored ministries on Erie Gives Day. And special thanks to The Erie Community Foundation and the Erie Gives sponsors who provided funds for the prorated match: Erie

Insurance, Wabtec, EE Austin Companies, ERIEBANK, Knox Law, Little Caesars/Dickey's BBQ, McInnes Rolled Rings and Northwest.



Records were broken yet again with this year's Erie Gives Day!

Check out this year's numbers for the 12 hour event:

**8,976** donors gave more than **\$5.5 million** to **391** non-profit organizations in our area.



Save the date  
 October 18-20, 2019

A Catholic Leadership Conference  
**Women of the Church**  
 Saint Mary's College  
 Notre Dame, Indiana

<http://www.womenofthechurch.org/about>

## get to know ssj associates



**Joan Fels**

With Sr. Joyce Lowrey as her mentor, Joan became an associate in 2017. She is a member of Holy Cross parish in Fairview. She attends daily mass at the CLC and has come to know many of the sisters. She has been a member of a faith sharing group for more than 10 years.

Joan has worked extensively in the health and wellness fields and was the health and fitness coordinator at the YWCA for many years. She also worked in the cardiac rehab at Saint Vincent Hospital. Now retired, Joan teaches fitness classes to seniors at Fitness U. and, in September, she will begin "Gentle Exercises" for the sisters at the CLC.

Joan enjoys hiking, biking, walking, traveling and learning, especially in the areas of religion and history.

In 2014, Joan was among a group from Erie who traveled to Spain to complete the Camino de Santiago, or Way of St. James. Joan is among four SSJ associates who have walked the Camino.

## associates' news and happenings

### Summerpalooza thanks!

Dear SSJ Associates,  
Thank you so much for the coffee, creamer, socks and t-shirts you donated to St. Patrick's Haven thru Summerpalooza. Wow! Your donations will help us continue to serve the "dear neighbor" – the homeless men of Erie. The men look forward to a cup of coffee each evening so your donations are tremendously appreciated. Thank you for your kindness.

Blessings!  
Betsy Wiest

### MEN ONLY!

It is not too late to make an RSVP to attend the morning of exploration and reflection on the Eucharist which will be held Saturday September 14th in the Gathering Room at the CLC from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon. The session will be facilitated by SSJ Associate Deacon John Mang. RSVP on the SSJ community page at [www.ssjerie.org](http://www.ssjerie.org) or 836-4134.

### Associate Pins

There are some extra associate pins in the office. If anyone is in need of one, please contact the associate office.

### Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to all associates who are celebrating birthdays in September, especially to Pat

Mayer and Gary Flick who are celebrating milestone birthdays.

### Associate Candidates

Nine associate candidates will begin their year of formation on September 21, 2019. Sister Mary Fromknecht will facilitate the first session: Theology of Call. If you know anyone who might be interested in becoming an associate, it is not too late to extend an invitation. Call 836-4134 or email [ssjassociates@ssjerie.org](mailto:ssjassociates@ssjerie.org)

### Maxim moments

In the 17th century, Father Jean Pierre Medaille wrote the Maxims of Perfection or fundamental rules of conduct that a person seeking a life with God could follow and they still have a message for us today. We offer the following Maxim this month for your personal reflection

### Maxim 22

Be satisfied that God alone is aware of your good deeds. Contemporary translation: Desire a sense of self that doesn't need publicity.

### For reflection:

- I remember that God is the source of my best inspirations.
- Today I will do a random hidden act of kindness.
- God delights in my small efforts to care for Earth.



**Erie CROP Hunger Walk and Campaign**

**September 15, 2019  
2:00 p.m. walk begins  
Presque Isle Beach #1**

The Erie County CROP Walk is celebrating its 44th year. CROP is an international effort to alleviate hunger. More than one billion persons worldwide are hungry each day -- that's one

out of every seven people in the world. Nearly 6,000 children die each day from hunger-related causes— that's one every five seconds.

People are hungry in the United States, too. If all 36.2 million Americans faced with food insecurity stood in line at a food pantry in New York, the line would stretch to Los Angeles and back. Twice.

The Sisters of St. Joseph

Neighborhood Network receives a donation from the CROP Hunger campaign which is used to feed the hungry. Please consider being a sponsor through a monetary donation and/or be a walker. There is a one mile walk for those not desiring to walk the 6 mile walk. Rocking chairs are also available for those who prefer to "rock."

Please contact Sister Phyllis Hilbert at 454-7814 or [philbert@ssjnn.org](mailto:philbert@ssjnn.org) , or Sister Millicent Zimmer at



**Happy 100th birthday,  
Sr. Rachel!**

*Or, is it 101?*

*(Only her hairdresser knows for sure!)*

## events, happenings and ministry news

### brown bag & basketry

#### Large Door Basket



**September 9 & 10**  
**3:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Ground floor of Heritage Apts. on the former Villa campus, 2547 West 8th Street. Specific instructions will be provided when you register.

**COST: \$30**

**MATERIALS: Bag supper, comfortable clothes, old towel, dishpan.**

To make a reservation:  
**s.andrefeulner@ssjerie.org**  
or **836-4139** or **969-1429**.

### And so it begins!

A new roof is going onto St. James Haven. RC Construction, owned by Ray Coblenche has been wonderful to work with and provided top notch service to the Haven. We feel it is imperative that we maintain the structure of the building so that we are able to continue to offer this much needed ministry in our community. It is our goal to complete a project each year to keep our Haven in tip top shape.



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**Little Italy**  
**Farmer's Market**  
**331 West 18th St.**  
**FRESH, HEALTHY, LOCAL**



**Mondays, 3-6 p.m.**  
**through September 30**

### Volunteer Opportunities at Saint Vincent Hospital

Contact Jodi Andres  
Phone: 814-452-5646  
[Jodi.Andres@ahn.org](mailto:Jodi.Andres@ahn.org)  
Or apply online at  
<https://www.ahn.org/volunteer-application>

**SAINT MARY'S**  
**FOLLIES**

*Celebrating*  
*"A Lifetime of Giving"*  
*and 135 Years of Caring*  
**Thursday,**  
**September 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**Bayfront Convention**  
**Center**  
**5:00 – 8:00 PM**  
**\$75 per person**

Contact Emma Toner, 451-1316  
or  
[etoner@stmaryshome.org](mailto:etoner@stmaryshome.org)  
for more information,  
or to RSVP by August 30<sup>th</sup>.

## SSJ Neighborhood Network's Annual CELEBRITY BARTENDING EVENT

**Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**5:30-9:30 PM**

**La Nuova Aurora Club, 1518 Walnut Street**

**Free admission**

**Gift Baskets**

**Games of chance**

**All bartender tips benefit SSJNN**

**Live music from the Breeze Band on the bocce courts**

**Snacks and light refreshments provided**

**Additional items for purchase from Rory's Ristorante**

**Beer wine and cocktails for purchase**

### **Bartenders announced soon!**

**SSJ Neighborhood Network**

**814-454-7814**

## where's the justice?

### Rep. Curt Sonney— Supportive of HB 1513

Betsy Wiest recently met with **Curt Sonney** to discuss House Bill 1513 which would change the content and placement of signage in PA rest stops. Rep. Sonney was very supportive of the legislation and said he would work to support this bill which would not only educate travelers but also help victims of human trafficking.

### Many hands make light work

During the annual maintenance shutdown at St. Patrick's Haven, **William and Grace McVay**, along with SPH guest **Kenny**,

Painted the storage room where guests keep their belongings when staying overnight at the Haven.

Grace is a junior at Penn State main campus and William attends McDowell high school.



### The heart of social justice

Do you wonder what can be done to help our world deal with issues such as human trafficking, the environment, immigration, the death penalty, etc? Please consider joining the Sisters of

St. Joseph Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation Team. We sponsor many activities throughout the year to bring awareness of issues and work to make the world a better place. If you have a heart for social



justice and just helping people, please call Betsy Wiest, Social Justice Coordinator at 814-836-4153.

### Sara's Siles on St. Patrick's Haven

**Sean Candela**, owner of Sara's Restaurant in Erie, and Erie News Now, recently selected St. Patrick's Haven as the recipient of a \$250 donation through its Sara's Smiles program. St. Patrick's Haven was also presented with gift cards for food and ice cream to be used by Haven guests. Thank you Sara's for partnering with St. Patrick's Haven to bring a smile to the faces of the men we serve.

### Community groups learn about homelessness

Betsy Wiest gave a presentation to a group of residents at Springhill Living Center on August 8<sup>th</sup> and to the Asbury Seniors Group on August 12<sup>th</sup> about the history and operations of St. Patrick's Haven. The group discussed what homelessness looks like in Erie and how they can help St. Patrick's Haven continue the mission of serving homeless men in Erie.

### Take Back the Site Vigil

The Sisters of St. Joseph coordinated a Take Back the Site Vigil on August 13<sup>th</sup> for Christopher Hakola who was murdered in his home on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Many family members and friends of Christopher attended as well as representatives from the Sisters of St. Joseph,

Benedictine Sisters and Sisters of Mercy. Chris was remembered as a man who loved his family, especially his grandchildren. The vigil reclaimed his home and the property for non-violence.

### Human Rights Award

The JPIC Team was awarded the Human Rights Award by the Church Women United for leadership; service as mentors and social activists; and for advocating for peace and justice.

Thank you to our community partners shown in the photo: the Crime Victim Center of Erie and the Lutheran Women of Erie.



### St. Patrick's Haven

We are in need of volunteers for this ministry of presence. Currently, there are three evenings per month with no volunteers. If you feel called to this ministry, contact Betsy at 836-4153.

### SAVE THE DATE!

**Deb Seng, Patrice Swick and Betsy Wiest** will speak about their experiences volunteering at Annunciation House on the U.S./Mexico border at the Jefferson Society, 3207 State Street in Erie on Monday, September 23, 2019 at 7 p.m.

## Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

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## United States resumes federal executions

On July 25, 2019, after a 16-year hiatus, the U.S. government reinstated the federal death penalty. For two decades, the U.S. has been trending away from capital punishment. July 2019 was the first month in recent memory which held no scheduled executions and offered us a glimpse of what a death penalty-free future might look like. Twenty-five states have distanced themselves from the death penalty in some capacity.

The Catholic Church's teaching on capital punishment is very clear. It states that the death penalty is "inadmissible" in all cases "because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person." (CCC2267)

By resuming the death penalty at the federal level, this is promoting a culture of death when in today's world, we so desperately need to promote a culture of life.

Helen Prejean, CSJ, longtime advocate against the death penalty and author of *Dead Man Walking*, said, "For decades we have been gradually shutting down the machinery of death until it is rarely used, a geographical freak practiced by outlier countries. And now, here we have the federal government revving up the death machine." Sister Helen further stated, "We know that the death penalty is deeply flawed, with a terrible history of racism in its implementation and an equally terrible history



of errors, resulting in many innocents on death row. We also know that it does not offer the healing balm to victims' families that is promised," Capital punishment has been abolished or suspended throughout Western Europe and in 170 nations around the world. The United States is among a handful of nations, including China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt and Iraq, that continue the practice.

Of interest: Sister Helen Prejean's new memoir, *River of fire: My Spiritual Journey* tells her story leading up to the writing of *Dead Man Walking*. It is available on Amazon.com.